

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

I firmly oppose the proposed rules changes that would further diminish the existing dearth of competition in cable television. I further object to Michael Powell presiding as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission in this and all cases, owing to the evident conflict of interest he has in such matters, given that his father, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, is a major shareholder in AOL Time Warner and sits on the corporation's board of directors. AOL Time Warner stands to profit handsomely from the elimination of the cable ownership cap, and its gain would come at the consumer's expense as cable outlets would be concentrated in even fewer hands. As it is, there are not nearly enough different cable outlets providing forums for the diverse viewpoints and opinions that represent the broad cross-section of American society. By eliminating the cable ownership cap, the FCC will only ensure that many un- and underrepresented viewpoints will be further marginalized from the narrowing mainstream.